Ichiro Morita's World War II Letters

July 24, 1943

Air Mail

Hon. F. de Amat, Consul
Spanish Consulate
58 Sutter St.
San Francisco, Calif.

Honorable Sir:

I am taking the liberty of writing to you to plead if you cannot please help me concerning my father, Takuritsu Morita, ISN 23-4-J 792-Cl, formerly at Lordsburg, N. Mex. but now detained at Santa Fe, N. Mex.

I am 17 years old, the eldest of a family of 8 children. All are going to school except the youngest, aged 4. Ever since my father was taken away from home in February of last year, mother has been very worried and not very well. She has continued to lose weight, especially in the past few months. I thought she was bearing up pretty well under the very trying circumstances (she even went to night school to study English to try to keep her mind occupied), but lately she seems to be on the point of breaking down completely. She cries a great deal of the time and seems to spend more time brooding. We are getting worried about her and I, being the oldest, decided to write to you to plead if you cannot help us with advice or assistance in getting father released and returned home to us. I am sure that if he comes back, all our problems will be solved.

In order to earn a little money for the family, I am working during the summer on the garbage crew. I cannot work at any other time because I am still going to school. My two younger brothers, aged 14 and 16, are working on the road maintenance crew, but as they are still young, the work is not easy and they come home all tired out. As we have no other sources of income at other times, we are receiving public assistance grants but this is not sufficient to meet the needs of a family as large as ours.

None of our family have requested repatriation. Since our one wish is to keep our family intact, we have requested a transfer to the family internment camp at Crystal City, Texas, so that we could be together again in the event father could not be released.

But according to latest reports, there will be no further reunions of families for about six months. Because of this situation, could you please contact the Philadelphia office of the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and inquire as to whether or not our family's name is included on the list of those who will be permitted to go as soon as facilities at that Camp are ready? If it is not, I would be very grateful if you can recommend our family's name. If I could only get a confirmation of this, then I think it will help lift my mother's spirits up considerably and make it easier for me and my brothers and sisters too.

Thank you very, very much!

Yours very sincerely,

Ichiro Morita

If you ever wondered

what the Japanese went through if the father of the family was taken away by the FBI, read no further than Ichiro Morita's letter while his family was incarcerated in Heart Mountain, Wyoming.

He poignantly describes his family's situation after his father, Takuritsu, was separated from the family and sent to Lordsburg, New Mexico.

A quiet man, Ichiro would leave quite a legacy behind. He was one of the 63 'draft resisters' from Heart Mountain.

Ichiro *registered for the draft*. He conscientiously opposed the draft by failing to report for pre-induction physical examinations.

He was sentenced to three years at the federal prison at McNeil Island in Washington State in violation of the Selective Service Act on June 26, 1944.

Born in Alameda, CA, Ichiro's family moved from Alameda to Mountain View in 1933.

ALAMEDA Japanese American HISTORY PROJECT

REPRODUCED AT THE N

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COPY

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